

**An
Anarchist's
Manifesto**

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Introduction

THIS manifesto is not a definitive or fixed blueprint, it is one Anarchist's personal view of how things are today and how they might be. If it results in just a few people stopping to think about different ways of doing things before they give passive and uncritical support to the status quo in the form of a vote, it will have served its purpose. The vision of such a free society has long been a source of hope. Anarchism also offers ways of improving the quality of life now, not in the distant future, when a politician finally speaks the truth.

Budgets & Taxation

IN our present Capitalist society budgets and taxation are the means by which the 'Ruling Class' as personified by the government of the day plans and finances spending on such items as Nuclear Weapons, Armies, Prisons, Tax Subsidies for the rich and so on, all financed out of the taxed wages and profits of the productive economy. Health, Social, and all other useful services are also financed from this source, but the 'Services' so provided are centralised, bureaucratic and unresponsive to local need. They function to the State's own requirements not that of you and me.

In an Anarchist Society resources would still have to be provided from the productive economy to finance services, but these services would be those deemed necessary by ordinary people and would be controlled by them. Taxation would no longer be the means by which the wealthy and powerful exploit the economy and society for their own benefit.

Suggestions for further reading on Anarchism.

Anarchy In Action by Colin Ward

Freedom Anarchist Fortnightly Newspaper

The Raven Anarchist Quarterly Magazine

All the above publications are available from:

Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street,

London E1 7QX Send S.A.E. for price list.

Defence

OUR safety is too important to be left to the politicians. With the end of the arms race we should be reducing our armed forces and nuclear weapon stockpiles. In an Anarchist society defence would be in the hands of an armed citizen's militia, such as in Switzerland today. International disputes would be settled by negotiation and dialogue not armed force and war, though we retain the right to self-defence if attacked or invaded. Peace and co-operation would be the aim of defence policy.

From here to there

Many people like the idea of controlling ones own life which is the basis of Anarchism but then claim Anarchists are Utopian, and that we cannot bring about the society we seek. But who can predict when change will come? or how? whether by evolution or revolution. Few Russians in 1975 would have predicted the collapse of state-communism fifteen years later. Change will come through people not parliaments, when people act for themselves by General Strike, Insurrection or whatever.

Money & Inflation

TODAY money is not only a 'means of exchange' within the economy. Money is used by governments, banks and 'city' speculators to serve their own interests and to make vast profits. Inflation is not merely the result of the workers supposedly making 'greedy' wage claims. Government spending to finance such non-productive services as the armed forces, prisons, and useless bureaucracy plays a big role in creating inflation since it creates too large an amount of money in circulation in relation to the productive capacity of the economy.

Anarchist society would continue to use money as a 'means of exchange' and to assist the distribution of goods and services to where needed. We would replace the present banking system with a network of community banks, serving and answering to the local community. Money in circulation would no longer be a source of speculation. Money would become the means to balance production and consumption in the economy.

The Economy

AN Anarchist economy would be a 'mixed' economy with 'worker collectives' controlling and running most large productive enterprises and services. There would be self-employment for millions and a much reduced private small sector. Money will still be used to facilitate production, distribution and exchange. The printing and issue of money being undertaken by a network of 'community banks'. Production in this new economy would be firstly to meet 'need' and not merely to make profits. There would continue to be 'work', shops, factories, transport etc but the conditions, hours of work, products and services created would be very different. The quality of life at work will be vastly improved. Harmful and useless goods and services would disappear as people increasingly refuse to take part in producing them. When people have a real say, then the work we do shall be useful, more interesting and of shorter hours than at present.

Elections & Decision Making

IF voting could change things they would make it illegal! or so runs one traditional Anarchist slogan. People today feel powerless as decisions about vast areas of life are taken by indifferent politicians and bureaucrats loafing at Whitehall and County Halls around the country. At work decisions on hours, wage rates, conditions are all part of the management's supposed 'right to manage'. Yet we as human beings have the right to a 'say' in all aspects of society and work as they affect our lives. A general election with one cross on a piece of paper every 4 or 5 years is a poor substitute for a real 'say'. Decision making about local matters needs to be decentralised to the local parish and town ward level. Matters of national concern such as the route of railways, roads, peace and war etc should be settled by referendum. Politicians when elected as our M.P.s put their own interests first. We need to take decisions for ourselves and not give up our power to politicians.

Prisons & Crime

ANARCHISM seeks to abolish police, prison, institutionalised punishment and to diminish criminal acts by members of society. This is not a contradiction in terms. Different societies lock up different proportions of offenders. The Netherlands has a much smaller number in prison per head of population than does Britain. Most people do not think 'law & order' necessary because of their own criminality, but because of other people's misdeeds. Ask yourself how often in your life you have needed to call the police? Not weekly or even monthly. The Home Office plans for time of civil emergency (ie war) include provisions to set free all prisoners except category 'A'. This group is usually some 2000 out of a total of approximately 45000 people. This is the state's admission that it does not need to incarcerate so many. The people who are sent to prison are not improved by the experience and most will reoffend. Prisons are pointless.

Ecology & The Environment

IT is obvious that human society is having a huge impact on the world's environment. The return of 'smog' to urban areas during winter, polluted drinking water, rivers and seas, holes in the ozone layer, increased carbon-dioxide levels in the atmosphere, flooding, erosion, starvation in the third world are all 'stories' seen regularly on television. We cannot go on ignoring our effect upon the world. We must seek to protect and restore both the human and the natural environment, not only by our campaigning on 'single' issues, by beginning to change our wasteful and polluting economies. We will make all products recyclable and also more durable. This would reduce the need for raw materials and energy to convert them to finished products. A sane energy policy with the use of renewable sources of power is essential, a campaign to insulate our homes, factories and offices would reduce fuel consumption. To save ourselves, we must save the world.

Housing

Since 1979 millions of ordinary people have become home owners attracted by the prospect of controlling their own home, and also by the possibility of financial gain. However, there are increasing numbers of homeless and destitute people sleeping on the streets of most major cities, thousands of people in squalid 'Bed & Breakfast' accommodation, and many more enduring the misery of 'repossession' of 'their' home by mortgage lenders and building societies. A home of your own is a 'right' not merely something for speculation on the housing market. Even if Anarchist society retains a market in housing this is one area where social provision and planning is essential if people are to be guaranteed a roof over their head. We would give financial support to self-build schemes. We would also revive a local community owned rented sector administered by means of 'Housing Co-operatives' in order to ensure that all in need have a home.

Welfare

ANARCHISTS seek to encourage the return of real community concern and 'Mutual Aid' so that the need for organised Social Services would henceforth be diminished as people increasingly helped each other out when in need. However we recognise that this will take time to occur. Organised Social and Welfare services will continue under community, user, and worker control. The services would be organised on a decentralised basis to meet local needs, and would be financed out of local taxation. Voluntary initiative and the present 'voluntary sector' would continue to operate providing a wide variety of support to elderly, handicapped persons and others in need. The workers, community, & people helped would have equal status in the planning and control of such services. Community care, respect for individual dignity, and self help where feasible would be the underlying philosophy of Anarchist welfare policy.